

Utah Ag. Legislation

Utah Legislators took action on several bills that affected Utah Agriculture. One of the more high profile bills was **HB 119**, Kevin Garn's Quality Growth Act of 1999. The Act Creates a 13-member Quality Growth Commission to advise the Legislature and local governments on growth management issues and to administer certain funds for growth related projects. This bill underwent multiple drafts and passed.

The following is a partial list of agriculture-related bills as compiled by the Utah Farm Bureau.

HB 125, County Option Sales and Use Tax for Conservation Easements (E. Olsen). Allows counties to impose 1/8 % sales and use tax to acquire conservation easements for preservation of open space and agricultural land. The bill passed the House but was not heard by the Senate. It failed.

HB 150, Animal Health Amendments (M. Brown). Removes the mandatory bangs vaccination requirement for Utah cattle, which is consistent with Federal Uniform Methods and Rules for brucellosis free states. It requires testing cattle that enter the state from any other brucellosis free state if the cattle are not from a ranch of origin. Canadian cattle that are not vaccinated but test negative for brucellosis will be allowed into the state. Cattle that are traded within Utah will no longer have to meet the vaccination requirement. Passed.

HB 169, Annexation of Agriculture Protection Areas (D. Ure). Requires the consent of the owners of all property within an Agriculture Protection Area (APA) before an annexation petition of that area can be approved. The bill also requires similar consent for withdrawal of the area from APA status after annexation. At the request of Farm Bureau, the bill was also amended to incorporate consistencies between counties and cities on how petitions for APAs are received. Passed.

HB 196, Regulation on Hunting Cougar or Bear (M. Styler). Eliminates the requirement to obtain a small game license to hunt cougar or bear. This change in the law was proposed because the hunting season for these species staggers two calendar years (fall to spring). Passed.

HB 254, Regulation of Sale of Certain Seeds (E. Anderson). Provides that seed may be labeled as "Variety Seed

by reducing the number of signatures required to nominate an individual 17 1 reD -0|own to five signatures. The voluntary assessment of one cent per 100 pounds of milk or cream produced is reduced to three-fourths of one cent. Passed.

HB 311, Appropriation for Rural Growth Management (K. Johnson). Appropriates \$150,000 to support the governor's 21 "Century Communities Initiative and to provide regional circuit-rider planners to assist rural counties and communities with planning needs. Passed.

SB 45, Domesticated Elk Harvesting (L. Blackham). Deletes the prohibition against hunting domestic elk and directs the Department of Agriculture and Food to promulgate rules governing the possession, transportation, and documentation of domesticated elk carcasses. Passed.

SB 81, Funding for Cougar and Bear Depredation (B. Evans). Appropriates \$150,000 to the Division of Wildlife Resources to compensate livestock owners for livestock damaged by cougar and bear. The bill failed. However, \$50,000 was appropriated to the DWR for this purpose. The Division also has access to restricted funds that can be applied to 1/2 of the balance of any claims not satisfied by the appropriated \$50,000.

SB 85, Appropriation to Rural Rehabilitation Fund (L. Blackham). Transfers \$2 million from the Agriculture Resource Development Fund to the Rural Rehabilitation

APRIL 1999

Ag. News on the Web



Agriculture License Plates



1998 Crop Prices



Ag. Legislation Summary



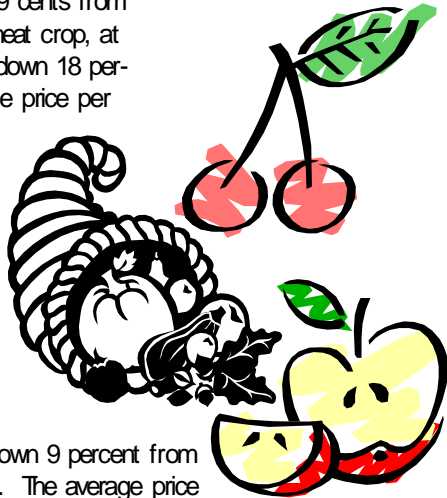
Value of Utah Crops Down in 1998

By: Utah Agricultural Statistics Service

The preliminary value of principal crops produced in Utah during 1998 is \$290.2 million, down 8 percent from the 1997 crop year, according to the Utah Agricultural Statistics Service.

The 1998 all hay crop is valued at \$210.3 million, down \$12.8 million from 1997. The price per ton is down \$6.00 to \$78.00. Barley is valued at \$12.0 million, down 34 percent from the 1997 crop. The average price of \$1.70 per bushel is down 59 cents from 1997. The all wheat crop, at \$23.9 million, is down 18 percent. The average price per bushel for winter wheat is \$2.75, a 54 cent decrease from the previous year; and spring wheat, at \$2.45, is down \$1.06 cents. Corn for grain is valued at \$8.1 million, down 9 percent from the previous year. The average price per bushel, at \$2.40, is down 65 cents from 1997. Oats, valued at \$851 thousand, is down 40 percent. The price of \$1.35 per bushel is down 62 cents from the previous year.

Nationally, the value of principal crops totaled \$92.8 billion, down 12 percent from 1997. For more information contact: DelRoy Gheiting
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UDAF/UACD Celebrate Ag. Day Unveil Agriculture License Plate

Utahns will now be able to show off their support for farmland protection by displaying an agriculture license plate now available at the Department of Motor Vehicles. The plate joins several others such as the Olympics, Wildlife Resources and Veterans.

The agricultural license plate was unveiled as part of National Agriculture Day.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food joined the Utah Association of Conservation Districts (UACD) by showing off four sample license plates. The plates were displayed on vehicles belonging to Commissioner Peterson, and the President of the UACD.

The 1998 Utah Legislature passed Senator Alarik Myrin's S.B. 134, authorized the creation of Soil Conservation Special License Plates and provided an effective date of January 1, 1999.

The agriculture license plates are aimed at teaching Utahns the importance of agriculture in their daily lives. The introduction of S.B. 134 came during the "Year of the Farmer" in Utah. The plate is intended to remind drivers of the source of their food and fiber, especially in growing urban areas, and to bolster the agricultural industry in Utah.

The cost for the agriculture license plate is \$25.00. The UADC Education Committee will use the proceeds for statewide community education projects promoting agriculture.

"This is an excellent way for people to express their support for protecting our agricultural heritage and the environment," said Agriculture Commissioner, Cary G. Peterson. "The funds raised will be used to educate the public about the values of soil conservation and the contribution that agriculture makes to their lives," he added.

Utahns support agriculture land protection, judging by their recent response to the Envision Utah survey. The survey reports that 25 percent of those who completed the questionnaire ranked agriculture land use as the first or second most important issue facing the community.

As milk prices fall

RELIEF FOR DAIRY FARMERS ANNOUNCED BY GLICKMAN

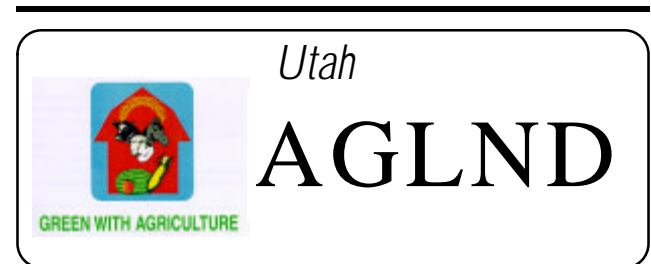
Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced a \$200 million program to assist dairy farmers facing greatly reduced milk prices. Dairy farmers will get payments of up to \$5,000 each under the new Dairy Income Loss Assistance program.

The fall in the basic formula price (BFP) for milk, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's benchmark dairy indicator, announced March 5, was the sharpest monthly decline of milk prices ever, and more than twice the previous record monthly decline. As a result, USDA expects farmers' milk receipts to be substantially lower over the next several months.

"Smaller dairy farmers are already being hurt by conditions beyond their control," said Glickman, in remarks to the National Farmers Union today. "More declines in the price of milk will put many of them in serious financial difficulties. This payment program will help many of them survive this decrease in prices."

Under Glickman's plan, USDA will make payments based on a dairy operation's first 26,000 hundredweight (cwt) of milk produced in 1998 or 1997, whichever is the highest. Targeted to family-sized operations, the plan is based on a level roughly equivalent to the annual production of a herd of 150 cows.

All dairy farmers who produced milk during the last quarter of calendar year 1998 are eligible.



Mockup of Soil Conservation special license plate. Personalized or standard plates are now available from the Department of Motor Vehicles for \$25.